

FREE STATE FARMS



Testimony Provided to the Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee

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Jackson & Mariner Svaty

Testimony in Support of H.B. 2650

Good morning. My name is Jackson Svaty and this is my brother Mariner Svaty and we are here to testify in support of H.B. 2650 which creates the state gemstone as Jelinite Amber. Jelinite amber is principally found in Ellsworth County. It is hard to find anymore because the one spot where it could be found is now at the bottom of Kanopolis Lake. My great-grandmother taught in a one-room schoolhouse that is now at the bottom of Kanopolis Lake too, but the state's first reservoir has provided a lot of great enhancements for the region.

Ellsworth County has very interesting geology and we get to go looking for these finds all the time. We've brought a few in today. Did you know the famous Sternberg fossil hunters, Charles and his son George, got their start in Ellsworth County? Charles tried ranching in the 1860s but then found leaf fossils in the Dakota sandstone and so he went back to school to study geology and then struck out for the chalk beds further west. His geology teacher at college was Benjamin Mudge, whose name is on the wall in the House Chamber.

Jelinite Amber is named for George Jelinek, who was from Ellsworth County and found the amber. He was also a member of the Kansas House of Representatives in the 1950s and 60s, and did a lot to feature the history of Ellsworth County. My dad didn't know him but my Grandpa Svaty did.

Mr. Chairman, we would recommend that rather than naming the state rock "limestone", which is prevalent in different forms around the country, we should declare a limestone specific to Kansas as the state rock. Our recommendation would be Greenhorn limestone, the famous "post rock" limestone that has the largest distribution statewide, running from Ford County all the way to Washington County, and can be seen as fenceposts everywhere in between.

We have never found Jelinite Amber but we would really like to, and if you come to Kanopolis Lake we would be happy to show you where to find these turitella snails and other neat minerals, like barite roses.

We hope you pass this bill and make the Jelinite Amber the state gemstone.